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C A N A

or
Little Chapters
on

COURTSHIP, MARRIAGE, H O M E

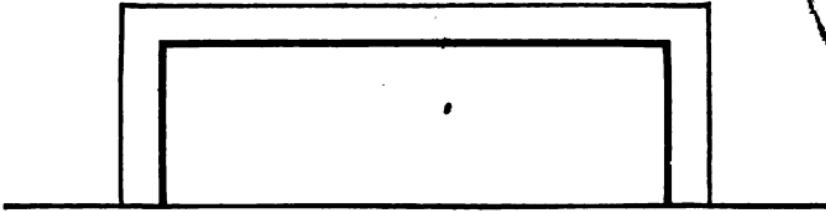
*By Charles Alfred Martin
of the Ohio Apostolate.*

56th to 65th Thousand

ST. LOUIS, Mo., 1911.

Published by B. HERDER
17 South Broadway

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Prologue

IT IS NOT THE PURPOSE TO PHILOSOPHIZE ABOUT MATRIMONY FROM THE VIEW-POINT OF THE STATESMAN OR THEOLOGIAN, BUT TO DISCUSS ITS PROBLEMS PRACTICALLY, FOR THE WORK-A-DAY MAN AND WOMAN OF THE STREET CAR AND THE SHOP, TO WHOM IT IS A REALITY, OR WILL BE: TO HAVE A HEART TO HEART TALK ON SO GREAT A THEME WITH YOUTHS WE LOVE, WHO MAY BE PUTTING OUT TO THAT LIFE VOYAGE WHICH IS

**"FOR BETTER OR WORSE,
FOR RICHER OR POORER,
IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH,
TILL DEATH DO US PART."**

Virginibus puerisque

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The Meaning of Marriage.

¶¹ For most young men and women, with health in their blood and life's fair prospects before them, the love that makes flutter the youthful heart looks forward to holy wedlock as the state in which it will receive stability and meaning and consecration. Marriage is not the ending of love, the last chapter of the romance as the story books have it; it is not the aftermath of the enchantment, of the hoping, fearing heart-throbs, the bright colors and soft-lights and warm buoyant life with which love beautified the world and drugged away every pain. No, the story books lied! Marriage is but the beginning of love; its realization and enjoyment; as courtship was its pursuit and conquest.

¶² Marriage is the rounding out, the perfecting of the individual life. It is the bringing to his side man's other half; his better half if you will. It unites with holiest bonds kindred souls who were made for each other and who need each other for the completion of their lives. "Male and female He created them." From the beginning the same God said: "It is not good for man to be alone." So most men have a vocation to the married life;

or perhaps better said, marriage needs no special vocation; and it is only a peculiar call to work whose sacrifices make it impossible, that may exempt from the divine injunction written as well in nature as in the Holy Book, "Increase and multiply."

"The Two Shall be One."

¶³ The youth not drawn by the spirit of God to live and labor in higher spheres such as that of divine ministration or self-sacrifice for others, nor handicapped by sickness or misfortune, is prompted by the instincts of his nature to marry. A student of human nature thus analyzes the call: "Even in the midst of home and friends and companions he feels a loneliness which none of these can fill; a yearning for some one who will be more to him than comrades, closer than sister or brother; who will fill a void in his life left vacant by the nearest of kith and kin; a heart-hunger for one who can be altogether his; one who will complete his confused and meaningless life; will be a part of himself; will be one with him." The Scripture gives expression to this longing of the human heart for its complement when it says: "The two shall be one."

¶⁴ And when the youth realizes that affinity, flashing of a sudden into his life, like the grace of God striking Saul, or mayhap grown into it quietly

and unrecognized till now, what newness and purpose life takes on. The old Greeks were right when they said, "Eros created the world out of chaos." Love is the soul of the world and all things have life from it. All the world loves a lover, because he smiles his love upon all the world. As Emerson says: "The same passion has a power over his own nature; it creates for him all things anew. It expands and ennobles his sentiments. It makes the clown gentle and gives the coward heart. Into the most pitiful and abject it puts a courage to dare great things, to defy the world, so only it has the approbation of the object loved. He is a new man; with new perceptions, new and keener purposes and a religious solemnity of character and aim. Now he is a person, a soul, a man. No longer can he merely appertain to family and brethren; but he leaves father and mother and friends, and cleaving to his wife, becomes a new social unit."

Love in a Cottage.

¶⁵ If the home that marriage has built, to settle down to life's keen realities, falls below the rhapsody of twenty in fever and poetry it makes up for it in peace and satisfaction.

If, as the years go by, the heart beats more slowly, the diviner elements of duty and virtue enter in, uniting lives together in God and children with a bond which only death can part.

What a picture such a home presents. It is the humble cottage of the common laboring man, one of the fifty thousand that adorn our city. The afternoon sun warns Mary, the busy housewife, that it is time to prepare the evening meal against the home-coming of her liege and lord. A little while longer she hangs over the bursting sewing-basket, whose endless contents of small dresses and torn trousers and socks and shirts and gingham and aprons and waists to be made or mended seem never to grow less despite her daily onslaught. Soon the kitchen fire is ablaze and the eatables are gotten out and prepared and the table is spread with immaculate linen, and pots and pans again fly into their place, and order comes out of chaos, and noble, happy Mary, proud of her home and her husband and herself, has time to tidy up a bit with a clean wrapper and a ribbon before the clock strikes six.

Out of doors, meantime, the keen nostrils of the children have caught the savory odor of the kitchen, and tired with their day-long romping, they swing on the gate and watch for their father whose coming the supper foretells, and whose dinner pail never fails to contain some bits of broken sweet-meats saved from the midday lunch.

¶⁶ Far down the street a hundred men pour out of the gates of a foundry. Their grimy faces and blackened hands and ruined clothes mark them

those least appreciated sons of toil, the unskilled laborers. They hurry along and pass each other, often in unsocial silence. They are tired and hungry and stolid. In the factory they are mere names on the payroll. They may come or go, it is all the same, others can fill their places without notice. Some of them turn into the many saloons along the road, where they sleep and board and spend their money. These count even less on the social chess-board than at the foundry. No one notes their home-coming. No one grieves over their going. No human heart beats in sympathy with theirs. They call no fellow creature their own. They are alone and lonesome and lost in the multitudinous city. No man or woman or little child listeth what else they do, so only they pay their bills. Reproach them for spending their money at the saloon and they will tell you it is their only home, their club. What else should they do with it? True, they belong to God; God's children they are by creation and redemption; but as Christ has said: "How can a man love God whom he has not seen, if he love not his neighbor whom he has seen?"

¶ 7 As the men approach the house with the wide, swinging gate, the little children rush down the street. It is easy to pick the man they seek. The grime of sweat and dust cannot hide the smile that betrays the father's face or the light that sparkles

in his eye. They surround him with clatter and talk and take his pail, which he exchanges for the youngest tot. And so with caresses and shouts he is led in triumph to his door, where Mary's honest kiss rewards his day's toil. Oh! blessed name of home! Here he is no mere pawn, but a man, a king, a husband, a father. Here are human hearts and souls divine and they are his. Here he is loved. Here he is cared for. Here he would be missed were his tarrying but for half an hour. And as he kneels at his evening prayer, he thanks the great God that love and marriage have entered into his lowly life and made it worth living.

Wives of Great Men.

¶⁸ The biographies of the rich and the great are brightened by the record of happy home life, no less than the annals of the poor. Though the wife may be free from the immediate work of the kitchen and laundry and sewing room, her services of still a higher sort, are none the less valued as they are none the less needed. The memoirs of men of letters, authors, statesmen, scientists and scholars are filled with acknowledgments of the immeasurable debt those great ones of the world have owed to their devoted helpmates; to the encouragement that spurred on the flagging industry of De-tocqueville; to the healing balm of love that consoled with un-failing cheerfulness and sympathy the long illness

of Tom Hood; to the confidence and respect that stimulated to work worthy of his power the sluggish genius of Sir Wm. Hamilton; to the appreciation which was the strongest incitement and to the approbation which was the sufficient reward of the gigantic literary labors of John Stuart Mills; to the peaceful, co-operation of his worthy helpmate that made the home of Sir Thos. Moore the model for all England; and in general, to the tender heart, the home of gentle innocence and ever-increasing affection, where the poor, busy head of man, tired and troubled with the world and business and politics and all things else, may find rest and peace, and fountains of renewed life and a foretaste of the bliss of heaven.

What is Home Without a Mother.

¶ "What is home without a mother?" we generally apply to the family circle which the dread messenger has bereft of its soul and center. The old proverb has a no less significant truth when referred to the house which has husband and wife but no parents; which is unblessed with living pledges of years of love; where, through awful fault or pitiful misfortune, woman, though called to the place of a wife, is not crowned with the glory of motherhood. The women to whom children are not sent often show their good will by becoming the adopted mother of some motherless little one.

¶¹⁰ The first law of human nature is said to be self-preservation, the second the preservation of the race. Both laws are safeguarded by instincts the strongest in man. If suicide is most repulsive to our feeling of what is human and moral, the unpardonable sin, its victim deemed a madman or a monster; so in like manner race-suicide is a loathsome perversion of nature; the inhuman stifling of the breath of life, the spilling of the blood handed down in trust from our ancestors and in which we were destined to live in generations yet unborn. It is a degenerate place unworthy the name of home that prefers the ring of the telephone to the ring of childish laughter.

Children are the natural fruit of marriage and its meaning: its sacredness is their sacredness; its dignity is their worth. Whatever act would violate this purpose and end of marriage is wrong. The slaughter of the innocents is work for a Herod. The commandment says: "Thou shalt not kill." When Onan destroyed the seed of life, the Lord slew him because he did a detestable thing.—Genesis, chap 38, 9-10.

¶¹¹ It is a saving grace that the youth of our country see in its highest executive a splendid example of reverence for the family altar and home-life; and a fearless defender of religious faith and morals, their only foundation: that Theodore Roose-

velt, the manliest of men, the ablest of leaders, the hero of war and of peace, is the president of the home and the advocate of the full baby-carriage.

Parents' Rewards.

¶¹² Doubtless none but a parent can know the pleasure and satisfaction which nature puts into the father's and mother's heart at the birth of their children. In these the parents are truly made one: and their mutual love lives on incarnate. Observe the noble change wrought by fatherhood in the bashful, awkward, perhaps till now, selfish young man. How he delights to tell you about his wonderful little elf! How he rushes home from work and watches to see if it be waiting at the window! With what unconscious pride he parades it through the streets of an evening, or perhaps with equal good will through the parlor at midnight! The lightsome girl is transformed with the coming of her babe into the quiet dignified matron, thoughtful and strong to lay down her life in duty if need be. What mother but will tell you that the greatest joy of her life was caring for her infant children!

¶¹³ Children give parents something to live for. If their infancy calls for the giving up of many social functions, the rewards are sweeter and truer and will remain when the noise of the theatre or

the dance has become a memory or a remorse. If their later education and bringing-up involves the sacrifice of many luxuries that money could buy, the investment will return dividends in filial love and present pleasure and fond hope and proud honor and gentle care in old age, that could not be purchased with the miser's hoarded millions.

The Man and The Woman.

¶¹⁴ This is the picture, however rudely sketched, of the ideal marriage, such as God intended it. It is the common hope that the dream formed thus beautifully in the fancy may not fade with the dawning of work-a-day facts, but be *realized* in happy home life. A noble hope in truth, but like all high ambitions much destined for sorry failure unless backed up by more than unproductive wishing. They say marriage is a lottery; but its failures are due not to blind fate so much as to blind folly, or blinding passion. Only a fool goes to his business with his eyes shut, and especially to a business where, as in matrimony, a man can err but once. A generous stock of common sense is a wholesome ballast to soaring sentiments.

The burden of failure with which folks crawl out of marriage is generally in inverse ratio to the amount of judgment with which they rush into it. If the pleasure of a brief holiday trip depends less on the weather than on the good fellowship of our company, with what control and judgment, and weighing of consequences should one make choice of a companion who is to be his for a whole lifetime.

Qualities of a Good Wife.

¶¹⁵ What are the qualities of the worthy wife? Scripture tells us in the famous description of the valiant woman—Proverbs, chapter 31. There we have the truest analysis of woman's work and the noblest tribute to her worth. All the endless duties which become our measure of her fitness are truly painted and admirably fulfilled: mother and nurse and teacher of the children; custodian of the family possessions; well versed in domestic economy; practiced in cooking and sewing; servant and mistress in one; then the solace and comfort and cheerful sympathizer and prudent counsellor and patient affectionate wife of her husband; and withal the ornament of the household as well as its heart and soul; gracious and hospitable and beautiful, too, in the beauty of character which does not fade. Happy the husband of such a wife; well indeed may her children rise up and call her blessed.

¶¹⁶ "The valiant woman openeth her mouth with wisdom." Young men are often taken captive by the mere magnetism of a beautiful form and face. But will the wise man marry mere beauty? Not that beauty is to be despised, since it is a frequent though uncertain manifestation of good health. But to marry a handsome figure without character, fine features without an admirable nature is a mistake

that swiftly brings its remorse. The external beauty of today becomes commonplace tomorrow; whereas the goodness of our mothers though shining through ordinary features is forever lovely and like wine becomes mellow and better with age.

¶¹⁷ "The law of kindness is on her tongue." The valiant woman is gentle. She cultivates self-control and good temper. If married people soon forget each other's faces, they are ever cognizant of each other's bad temper. Marriage, like government, is a series of compromises that needs diplomacy or better charity and self-control. A writer goes so far as to say: "Of all qualities 'tis good temper that wears and works best in married life." The poet Burns was evidently of this opinion, endorsed by the millions, that of all things likely to lose an otherwise good woman her social dominion and her husband's esteem and love, the surest is a bad temper. He distributes the qualities desirable in a wife under ten points. Two points he gives to good sense; fortune, family blood, higher education, social connections, etc., he bunches together, saying, "These must be expressed by fractions, as not one of them is entitled to the dignity of an integer." No less than four out of ten points he gives to good temper.

A Sound Mind in a Sound Body.

¶¹⁸ "The valiant woman girdeth her loins with strength and strengtheneth her arm." The work of the ordinary wife demands that she is a healthy woman. What is large part of her time is spent at home with her children and household labor. If this needs moral strength hardly less does it require physical endurance. To become a mother, perhaps again and again; to nurse children for years, and at the same time to give attention and care to the household, calls for a strength of nerve and muscle and a sound vital organism. Yet the healthy woman can do it, for it is the work for which nature has destined and so fitted her. Health and vitality are not always to be measured by appearances; a little, delicate looking woman often carries the burdens of others through life with marvelous cheerfulness and endurance.

¶¹⁹ Physical fitness is a broad and deep problem for both sexes. Men often shrink from marriage for fear of physical breakdowns and sufferings in their wives which they believe to be the not-uncommon consequence of married life. Indeed, if marriage were to blame for all one hears and sees of invalid wives, worn out while their husbands are still in their prime; of endless afflictions and infirmities that are presided over by an army of more or

less conscientious medical advisers and ministered to with drugstores full of more or less honest concoctions and contrivances, then indeed one might well be justified in holding back from its long responsibility and short-lived pleasure.

But happily, as the best physicians tell us, normally it is not the use but the abuse of nature that breaks down constitutions; just as the perversion of conscience and not its exercise ruins the moral character. It is true "when a woman travaileth she suffereth pain, but when she bringeth forth her child she rejoices that a man is born into the world." It may also happen that the most healthy and strong are suddenly cut down by disease or accident; but this is the exception, not the rule. There are legions of happy homes where the mother of half a dozen children is still young and vigorous at forty, able to bear the responsibilities of household care and to enjoy the pleasures which are their recompense.

¶²⁰ Much more might be said of physical fitness in the light of our growing appreciation of the laws of heredity. The children are your own children; they are very much what you and your parents through you make them. They may reveal to the third and fourth generation sins against body and soul that had been long forgotten and thought to have been buried years before. Hence, both boys and

girls should know the sacredness of the body and of the health and the wickedness of abusing and vitiating the stream of life entrusted to their keeping. Much of this problem is for private study or merges into the matter of moral fitness.

¶²¹ Ian MacLaren, perhaps with Scotch sense unduly hard, suggests that persons should not marry unless they can pass the physical examination required to obtain a first-class life insurance certificate.

Womanly Work.

¶²² "The valiant woman worketh willingly with her hands and giveth meat to her household." Through his stomach you can reach a man's heart and you can also break it. To be a good-natured man one must be well fed three times a day. Unless a girl learns to cook in her mother's kitchen, her husband's table is likely to be a sorry sight. Neither can a man much delight to pass his evening leisure in a home where dirt and disorder and neglected work reign, instead of that neatness and order which have a place for everything and everything in its place. As a woman would dress well, she should also sew well. The apprentice shop wherein a girl is likely to learn the best trade is her mother's house. Pity that her brothers cannot support her there and keep her from the competition with them which becomes an obstacle to the marriage of both.

¶³ "The valiant woman feareth the Lord," and serves him according to her conscience. Religion, the union of the soul with its God, in faith and hope and love, is woman's strength. In it as in a golden casket is preserved the jewel of virtue which is her worth and her charm. She loves God even more than her husband; and therein is her own liberty and her husband's defense. Her faith makes her mighty to bear every burden; yea, to go down into the valley of death if duty thither leads. She dwells with the angels as well as men, and her modest grace of soul, deeper than material charm is a well of living water which ever delights, and is never exhausted. It is well said that with religion woman is a guardian-angel, while without it she becomes a monster. The practical influence of religion in the family will become apparent in the discussion of mixed marriages.

¶⁴ Having viewed the long panorama of virtues and accomplishments expected of the candidate for the honors of wifehood, it is high time to turn the search-light on the being who requires such a perfect helpmate, and to ask the young man if he is prepared to give as much as he exacts.

Can I Afford to Marry?

¶⁵ When a young man thinks seriously of marrying, his first and generally last question is, "Can

I afford it? Can I support a wife and home?" This is often his only measure of his fitness, whereas in truth the financial question is the last and least important. If a young man has the moral and physical fitness for marriage; if he is sober and kind and industrious, he can be safely guaranteed a happy home on the living wage of the day, the security being the thousands of such homes existing under like conditions. No young man into whose head would come the fair vision of a hearth which he might call his own, is likely to starve in the United States. He can work and there is always a market for his labor; and the solution of the secret is the paradox which he perhaps has not learned, that two or three can live on as much as one, when one of the three is a prudent wife. A good woman will make her husband's money go a wonderful distance; for the hard-earned dollars are doled out by hands that realize how they both cost and purchase life.

¶²⁶ Doubtless there are young women whose dream is that a grand house filled with fine furniture should await them on their wedding day; who would have Cupid armed with a check book and fountain pen, rather than with his arrows of love. Unless such girls bring an equal amount of capital into the new partnership their lofty expectations mark them as selfish and silly. But it is an injustice to womankind to take such examples as fair

representatives of their sex. Their number are fewer than is fancied. A worthy young man often fears to ask the girl he believes should be his wife, to leave the greater luxuries of her father's house and share his humbler beginnings. And therein he does her the injustice of mistrusting her power of sacrifice.

While all girls would enjoy a fine establishment, most of them are willing to take their share and their chances in its acquisition. Love will make a cottage mansion enough; and as the equipments grow, they will be the more appreciated for the planning and dreaming and denials and proud expectation that went into the making them your own.

¶²⁷ It is very thoughtful in a way for the young man to grow gray before he is married at all, figuring out how he will send his sons to college and give his daughters piano lessons; but had his father the same habit of crossing bridges before he came to them, the world would likely have been deprived of the valued presence of this thoughtful young man, and himself of the keen joy of living.

A practical solution of the embarrassing financial question would be for boys to begin to lay by a little money each pay-day, as soon as they join the ranks of the wage earners; and to acquire habits of economy; realizing that it is a more substantial "smartness" to sit by your own fire in jeans than to

ornament a cafe front or stun a ball-room in unpaid for swallow-tails. It's not what can you earn, but what can you save. A policy in a benefit or life insurance company costs little and provides for the times of trouble that may come to any one.

¶²⁸ More pregnant of weal or woe than money or health is moral character. Between a kind, sober and industrious mechanic earning \$15.00 a week and a harsh, drunken sport with \$100.00 a week, what sensible girl would hesitate to choose the former!

Man's Moral Fitness.

¶²⁹ Let a young man try his own worth by the same tests he would apply to his partner. Have you the same even temper, the same forbearance and self control? Will you insult her ears after a month with unmanly cursing and swearing and foul billingsgate? Can she look up to you as the head and natural protector of the family, if you fall below herself in faithfulness to God and religion, the only foundation of virtue? Shall you invite her to follow your example and indulge in an occasional drunken spree? Shall you drag her down to be a sot? Or dare you ask a respectable woman to take a sot for a husband? Pity the girl who marries a drunkard to reform him.

Have you enough of manhood to keep yourself as free from impure taint as you know her to

be? As you would draw back with abhorrence from marrying the wanton toy of many lovers will you conceal beneath the smiles of your wedding day the defiled body and polluted mind of a rake? And during your courtship shall you, who should spring to defend her honor with your life, be the one to try to ensnare her virtue even with a breath; and ruin with your own hands, a life love which can never be quite the same for either, if the divinity of innocence has been defiled and the mystery of modesty profaned?

The girl that allows herself to be insulted is likely to be cast aside as unworthy to be a wife. If she has given up her virtue, her one pearl of great price to buy a lover, she has nothing left with which to win a worthy husband. Better eternal maidenhood with self respect and virtue known to God than a wedding ring bought with shame.

Age to Wed.

¶³⁰ The age at which young folks should marry and the length of their courtship is much discussed and generally with the conviction that in our day both are wont to be too long drawn out.

A man regretfully remarked as he danced his infant grandson laughing and crowing, from floor to ceiling; "This is something my boyhood never knew. I don't think I ever really loved my father;

I don't know whether he loved me. He was so much older and so serious that we were afraid of him."

It is better for parents to grow up, so to say, with their children, to romp with them in childhood, to be their confidant and companion in youth, to have their affection always.

There are moreover reasons of a physical nature that recommend the age of twenty or twenty-two as not too early for a girl to enter marriage. In later years motherhood is likely to be attended with more trial and risk.

A boy who is free to marry is generally better off for taking his place in the ranks of householders at twenty-four or twenty-five, if not earlier. Half a dozen years more of bachelordom are not apt to improve either his bodily perfection or his bank account or his moral worth.

Better to Marry than Burn.

¶³¹ Youth is exposed to varied temptations against chastity; and many young men indulge in unlawful pleasures till they lose the consciousness of shame and sin; and forget that they are bound by the same law of God as their sisters. Their sins may bring ruin only upon their own body and mind or they may involve the degradation of others and the support of institutions which are a standing

insult to womankind and civilized homes. If such men call themselves Christians and seek pardon for their damning sins, they must evidence the sincerity of their conversion by their willingness to remove at any cost, the proximate occasion of their falls. Now, if experience proves that their unmarried state is such an occasion of weakness they must get out of it or go unforgiven on the road to hell. Jesus Christ says of celibacy: "He that *can* take it let him take it." St. Paul adds: "Know you not that you are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any one violate the temple of God, him God shall destroy." And "It is better to marry than burn."

¶³² Virtue is not incompatible with celibacy. Some would have us believe otherwise, perhaps to excuse their own evil ways. But to remain in that state without a special vocation to it, is generally to court moral ship-wreck. "He that loves the danger shall perish in it." If those who sacrifice themselves on the altar of duty to a widowed mother or family or of service to society in charity and religion, turn celibacy into a heroic virtue, it is possible, because their motive in adopting it is not their own selfish interests, and their strength in sustaining it not their own human weakness. With Wisdom they have said: "As I knew I could not otherwise be continent except God gave it, I went to the Lord and besought him."

Six Million Bachelors.

¶³³ Some young bachelors are married to a petty political ambition, others to their business or professional career, till all the milk of human kindness is dried out of their calculating hearts and they are hardly fit for marriage at all,—too wise as they might say. Some citizens advocate taxing this wisdom.

Senator Beveridge asks: "Is it to-accomplish some good thing for humanity that you want this 'career'? Then just what is it you propose to do with these self-centered years during which you intend so to help the race? It is 'getting down to earth' and 'benefiting mankind' by taking care of some actual human being among the great indefinite mass called mankind. The making of a home is the beginning of usefulness. It is not necessary to build up your practice or make a lot of money in business before marrying. Begin at the beginning. * * * Such a man will be finding his mate and planning his house before he is twenty-five. The man who does not, is either too weak or too selfish to do so. In either case you need not fear him. He will never set the world on fire."

¶³⁴ Lo, the poor bachelor! He gets hard knocks. Another species is anxious to be married, but unfortunately the right kind of woman never crosses his path. He has dreams of the ideal woman and

has never a misgiving but that she would be glad to accept him. He is aware of his own importance and convinced that the wedding bells will ring when he gives the signal. And he is eloquent on the shortcomings of the women he does not know. They are extravagant, etc., he says with the air of one who is sure of his facts. We may cherish the belief that in any community there is a sufficient number of women with ideals high enough and character good enough to satisfy the most exacting man. The bachelor then should tell us the real working of his mind and so debar scribes from assailing his personality. Has he been jilted and afraid to try again? Or is he looking for an heiress, to condemn him later on? Is he loth to give up the "boys" and the little game, and the privilege of becoming bald in his own fashion? Is he really so exacting as he would have us believe; or is it dread of spending money except on himself that keeps him single?

We have seen the genus bachelor, gay and festive, in all his glory of youthful glow and ladies' smiles. And we have seen him in the sear and yellow leaf, in his lonely boarding house, shabby, vulgar, the victim of his younger follies, no longer able to conceal his low tastes or his tell-tale countenance, no longer interesting,—abandoned. And we have seen him in the gloomy death that follows a life meaningless because not lived for others, un-

wept, unhonored and unloved. If you would see what a pitiful sight age makes of the bachelor, take your mother and the home she made for him out of your father's life. These remarks do not strike the man who remains unmarried in order to sacrifice his life for others. His cause gives purpose to his life and consequent reward.

¶³⁵ In the United States, according to the census of 1900, there are 1,815,097 more males than females.

Between the ages of 20 and 44, there are—

Females 13,910,218

Married 9,459,726

Single 3,719,504

Males 14,722,225

Married 7,895,852

Single 5,958,760

The years between 20 and 44 are surely the years of marriage; yet we find about every third person single.

Woman seems from the figures more ready to assume the yoke of matrimony, and are not as numerous as men. With the later then would appear to rest the responsibility for the millions of unrealized homes and all that their absence implies. Six million bachelors in life's prime suggests the decadent days of ancient Rome.

Engagements.

¶³⁶ A machinist of twenty-three years was engaged to a worthy girl, but did not see his way to marrying as his widowed mother depended on him, her only child. A friend said: "Take the lassie home with you, she can help your mother and keep her company." They are happily wedded and instead of losing a son the mother has gained a daughter. Ten years of courtship with unfilial sighing for the mother's death, might have debased both characters.

While none but a fool or knave would marry a stranger; on the other hand protracted courtships are likely to breed familiarity, sin and later contempt. After six months or a year of company keeping a couple ought to know each other and either plight their troth or cease wasting each other's time.

Be too manly to monopolize a lady's attention, unless you mean to marry her, since your jealous dog-in-the-manger attitude may turn away more serious suitors. Be too fair-minded to prolong your intimacy for months and years without informing her definitely of your intentions. Speak out boldly, not slinking silently like a coward or a fool. Have an understanding, if need be, with her father or guardian, about your own and her social and financial condition. Finally if you judge her likely to

make for you a worthy and lovable wife, tell her so. "Faint heart never won fair hand."

Boys in their teens and girls of sixteen have no right seriously to be keeping company. It is well for them to go into society and to mingle with their friends; but infantile sentimentalities which easily lead astray, should be treated by judicious diversion and kindly advice, and the exercise of parental authority.

¶³⁷ In proposing matrimony to a lady it is not essential to use a handkerchief and one knee like the lover in the play. A sensible straightforward talk would become a man and appeal to a woman. A simple note from an honest heart will be a human document more eloquent than any "model epistle" copied from a so-called letter writer.

Should the lady refuse this highest compliment a man can pay her, let him not be discouraged; as the proverb says, "There are as good fish still in the sea as were ever caught."

If the engagement is made, it should be lived up to and treated as a sacred espousal.

The Catholic Church and Marriage.

¶³⁸ The Catholic Church is deeply concerned about marriage, because matrimony is a sacrament. Some have denied this. Strangely too, even Christian hands have been raised to tear down from its sacramental dignity an institution which the thoughtful infidel must consider the most sacred in life.

Marriage is hallowed as the home is hallowed: the abode of chaste love and heroic sacrifice; the nursery of virtue and character and future men and women. It is the cornerstone of society, which is made up of home units. It is sacred as the mother is sacred, holy as the babe is holy, divine as souls are divine. The Madonna with her child is the highest symbol of the divine in our human make-up.

Jesus Christ blessed the wedding of Cana by his presence and his first miracle. He rescued marriage from the degradation into which it had fallen and restored it to the primitive dignity with which God endowed it when he instituted it in the garden of Eden, and made our first parents husband and wife. "What God hath joined together, let no

man put asunder." It is sanctified in its origin and in the legislation of the Saviour.

The married state is not without its difficulties, and to cope with them successfully husband and wife need the grace of God; and this help He will not fail to send to those who sincerely seek it. Piety and prayer is its proper preparation.

¶³⁹ Because marriage is a sacrament whence domestic and civic virtue draw as from a well-spring their live-giving vigor the Church is its custodian. To her care is entrusted this sacrament even as is baptism or the eucharist. As its guardian she makes laws looking to its fit reception; and though the state may not enforce these laws any more than it does other laws of religion, nevertheless they bind in conscience and before God. To his Church Christ said: "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." Matthew, chapter XVIII, v. 18.

Such of these laws as most practically relate to conditions in our time and country, will be briefly noticed and each law will be illustrated by a "case" in the quaint but clear style of the text-books.

Mixed Marriages.

¶⁴⁰ The laws of the Church insist that marriage should serve to promote virtue and religion, not to destroy them. It is well that man and wife faith-

fully practice their religion and it is vital that both worship at the same altar. Two who share the same joys and sorrows; hearts that beat in unison to the same memories and hopes; two lives merged into one for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and health, even unto death, should not be divided when they approach their common God, in adoration, in petition in the hour of need, and in grateful thanksgiving for blessings in common enjoyed. In the guiding faith and sustaining hope and transforming charity of religion, with its pious practices to encourage and its divine sacraments to sanctify, man and wife should still be one and so bequeath to their children, as their richest legacy, the heirloom of a common faith.

¶⁴¹ Mixed marriages, as are called those unions where husband and wife are not of the same faith, are, by all the experience of the ages, a menace both to domestic peace and eternal salvation.

¶⁴² In the old law given to the Jewish people through Moses, Almighty God forbids mixed marriages and moreover gives His good reason for the command: "Thou shalt not make marriages with them. Thou shall not give thy daughter to his son, nor take his daughter for thy son. For she will turn away thy son from following Me, that he may rather serve strange gods; and the wrath of the Lord will be kindled and will quickly destroy thee." Deuter-

onomy, Ch. VII, verses 3-4. Before the time of Moses, the much traveled Abraham gives us the benefit of his observation when he says to the overseer of his household, "Swear by the Lord that thou take not a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell." Genesis, Ch. XXIV, v. 3.

Two thousand years later, under the spell of divine inspiration St. Paul warns the early Christians against putting themselves into the matrimonial yoke with unbelievers, arguing that what the faithful hold most sacred and essential in life, they can never possess and enjoy and practice in common with such as do not share their belief. II Cor. Ch. VI.

The great and learned St. Augustine, who certainly knew the world, wrote: "These miserable people have their food at home in common, but the table of Christ they cannot have in common; vowing to have their bodies faithfully united in one, while they rend the body of Christ through being attached to different communions. Great is the scandal, great the devil's triumph, great the ruin of souls."

St. Ambrose puts it in a nut-shell when he says: "How can there be accord of charity where there is discord as to faith?"

Two Thirds Lost.

C⁴³ Facts speak louder than words. So to those who flippantly wave aside the advice of sages and saints we present the following facts.

In the United States in our own day, how do mixed marriages affect the Christian character of the youth?

Where one of the parents is Catholic and the other Protestant, only 34 per cent of the young men belong to any church.

Where both parents are of the same Protestant denomination, 68 per cent of the young men are church members.

Where both parents are Catholics, 92 per cent of the young men go to church.

In other words from the Catholic families of the country, only 8 young men out of 100 are lost to the Church; from the Protestant families where the parents are of the same denomination, 32 young men in 100 are lost to organized Christianity; while in the families of mixed Catholic and Protestant marriages, 66 young men out of 100 are lost to all church affiliation. Two-thirds of the sons of mixed marriages going to swell the army of the great unchurched who are drifting back to paganism!

Only 8 per cent lost from the Catholic homes, to 66 per cent lost from mixed marriages!

What a terrible responsibility on the souls of those who trusted to themselves and scorned the laws of the Church, founded as is now evident upon right reason and natural ethics!

That religious differences are the source of disunion in families and end by destroying altogether the religion of the home, appears from the fact, that a youth has a better chance of a Christian bringing up if one of his parents has no religion at all. In families where the non-Catholic parent has no religion, 44 per cent of the sons are lost. This is surely bad enough; but where the non-Catholic parent is a Protestant 66 per cent are robbed of their birthright of faith.

These facts are taken from an article prepared by C. C. Michener for *Association Men* for November, 1901, and reviewed in the *Review of Reviews* for the following month. Its data is derived not from Catholic sources; but is based on a genuine census of men between 16 and 35 years, taken in representative cities, towns and rural districts in different parts of the country, and on figures furnished by the United States Census Commissioner.

The conclusion is inevitable; it is the handwriting on the wall. Better for Catholics to marry Catholics and Protestants to marry Protestants. Not as if Catholics and Protestants should not love each other and dwell together in peace as good

neighbors, but in order that the children may not lose their Christian faith and even their eternal salvation.

Occasional misunderstandings are sure to arise even in the best regulated families, without from the start, husband and wife being separated in what most deeply touches the soul; the one despising as a superstition what the other esteems most sacred; holding, perhaps without realizing it, principles radically different and destined inevitably to be felt some day in practical problems, and likely to disrupt peace and love and home.

¶⁴ "Mollie's Mistake" is the name well given to a booklet on this subject. For the woman entering a mixed marriage, there may be the apology that at her age or condition she may not receive another offer; and for such there is also the extenuating circumstance that as the mother is usually the dynamic religious force in the home, the odds are not so much against her preserving her faith and teaching it to her children, whose moral life she, being with them all day, is likely to dominate and influence more than the father.

Where to Find a Life Partner.

¶⁴⁵ Girls will help themselves to get good husbands, if they help their brothers to be good men. Treat your brothers as handsomely as you treat company; encourage a love for home and decent society, instead of driving them to the kitchen after their work or school hours; or to the streets, to associate with low company, and finally to drift to the saloon. You will then be training good husbands for some other girls and from the associates whom you have encouraged your brothers to choose with discrimination, and to entertain in your home, may come forth your own hero.

¶⁴⁶ The man who enters a mixed marriage can plead no excuse. He is not coerced by limited opportunities; he has no defense against its dangers; and yet no release from its awful responsibilities.

¶⁴⁷ A man should know what sort of a wife he wants, and seek her where she is to be found. You want a woman to whose care you can unhesitatingly entrust the responsibility of your children's soul and mind and body; who will be the guardian angel of your own salvation even should you for a time forget and neglect it. You want a woman such as your mother was, around whom cluster the memories of childhood's innocent days, of evening prayer and the

morning joy of first communion, and the example of a virtue which you know could do no wrong.

You will seek such a wife in Catholic associations and gatherings, the parish picnic or lawn fete or winter social. Proximity is the great match maker. If you move in Catholic society, even in case you "fall" in love, quite suddenly and blindly, you have insured yourself at least against any jeopardy of your faith.

At church, even, like Gabriel you may see some Evangeline on whom you will fix your eyes, "as the saint of your deepest devotion"; and you are faint hearted indeed if you cannot contrive to be introduced and invited to her home. If there are obstacles in the way, you will show your mettle by overcoming them. Go into Catholic homes. If you are self-respecting, the doors will open to your coming; if you are worthy of them, their daughters may bless you, by becoming your bride.

¶⁴⁸ In the name of God, shun the girl that haunts the Saturday night dance hall in search of a man. Beware of the bold adventuress who may try to seduce you and have you married to her before you realize what you are doing. Such women are not helpmates to men. Contemned and contemptible you will reap a harvest of wretchedness from the misery you have sown. You have thrown yourself away; and sold your birthright for a mess of pottage.

Marriages with Relatives.

¶⁴⁹ To explain how the Church deals with dangerous marriages when they are forced upon her, it is necessary to say a word about the impediments with which she hedges from abuse the sacrament of matrimony, and the dispensations by which she sometimes reluctantly lets down the bars.

¶⁵⁰ As wedlock involves posterity as well as those whom it at present unites, the Church gives it laws to safeguard from possible detriment both the natural and the spiritual life of the child. Hence the legislation which but echoes the teachings of nature that near relatives should not marry. Brothers and sisters, aunts and nephews and, in a lesser degree, first cousins are forbidden by natural instinct and the common consent of men, founded on a large observation, to contract marriages which for want of new blood may impoverish the race. Among all animals such unions often result in physical blemishes, and among men, not unfrequently also in mental and moral weakness or even idiocy.

Second and third cousins, for like reasons, avoid intermarriage, though the danger is more remote, and for sufficient reasons the Church may relax her laws preventing such unions.

The law touching this problem forbids Catholics to marry within the fourth degree of kinship.

The impediment to such marriages, unless removed by lawful authority, renders them null and void and no real marriage.

Marriages with Baptized Non-Catholics.

Q51 To protect the spiritual life other impediments forbid mixed marriages or the unions of Catholics with non-Catholics. Non-Catholics are of two classes, Christians and infidels. First then the non-Catholic party may be a Christian; that is, has been baptized by the rite of Christian baptism, but is not a member of the Roman Catholic Church.

If a Catholic marries a baptized non-Catholic without first obtaining a dispensation from the impediment forbidding such unions, from the proper ecclesiastical authority, which is the bishop of the diocese, the marriage was illicitly and sacrilegiously entered into and a mortal sin committed, and by the new legislation mentioned on page 46, the contract is invalid.

For example, Mary, a Catholic girl, is bent on marrying John, a Protestant, who has been baptized in the Lutheran church. Instead of going with confidence to her pastor, and asking him to obtain a dispensation from the bishop, she is married outside of the Church. The marriage is null and void; the sacrament was received unworthily and at unlawful hands. Mary will now have to renew her contract, before her pastor, repent of

her sacrilegious act and repair any scandal she may have given. How much easier to go to her pastor in the first place.

Marriages with the Unbaptized.

¶⁵² Secondly, the non-Catholic party may be what is technically called an infidel; that is to say, a person who has never been baptized as a Christian. This term includes unbaptized followers of Protestant churches, Jews, Mohammedans, etc., and those of no religion.

The impediment forbidding such marriages renders them null and void; hence unless a dispensation removing the impediment has been procured, no contract can be validly made and therefore there can be no marriage.

For example, George, a Catholic man, goes to a squire and marries Ann, the unbaptized daughter of a Baptist family, without obtaining a dispensation, of course. The attempted marriage is null and void and no marriage. George should go at once to his pastor who will assist him by obtaining a dispensation, or, better still, by instructing and baptizing Ann; after which the marriage may be made valid by the renewal of the vows.

Marriages before Squire or Preacher.

¶53 To protect the dignity of the sacrament of marriage and to make sure of its worthy and valid reception, the Church, to whose care all the sacraments are divinely committed, forbids her children to marry except her representative, the priest, be present. Because marriage is a contract, the State insists on having its representative present to witness the promises. For this end clergymen are made licensed officers to represent also the State. Because marriage is a sacrament, the Church insists on having her representative present to witness the marriages of her children. Catholics are forbidden, therefore, to contract marriage before the squire or preacher.

For Catholics to marry before a non-Catholic minister is worse than to marry before the squire, since it involves a sort of practical apostasy from the Church and the recognition of a sect. It is a double sin and to the guilt of sacrilege it adds the punishment of excommunication.

New Legislation.

By the decree "Ne Temere," issued by the Congregation of the Council, August 2, 1907, Pius X legislates for the Universal Church, that a Catholic must be married before the pastor or the Ordinary of the place or a priest delegated by either of these, and two witnesses; otherwise the attempted marriage is invalid, that is, null and void and no real marriage. This new and

important legislation goes into effect Easter Sunday, 1908.

There are two rare exceptions to this law:

1. "When danger of death is imminent, and the parish priest, or the Ordinary of the place, or a priest delegated by either of these cannot be had, in order to provide for relief of conscience, and (should the case require it) for the legitimation of offspring, marriage may be contracted validly and licitly before any priest and two witnesses."

2. "If it happen that in any district the parish priest or the Ordinary of the place, or a priest delegated by either of them before whom marriage can be celebrated, is not to be had, and that this condition of things has lasted for a month, marriage may be validly and licitly entered upon by the formal declaration of consent made by the sponsors in the presence of two witnesses."

This new legislation does not affect non-Catholics marrying among themselves, but it does affect all Catholics, good and bad, and whether marrying among themselves or with non-Catholics.

For example, Henrietta, a Catholic girl, engaged to marry Roland, thinks of her wedding more as a society function than a holy sacrament, and calls a minister into her home to witness the contract. Her contempt for the church's law leaves her attempted marriage not only a sacrilege which excommunicates her from the church, but also invalid.

What folly to please the world instead of God! Let Henrietta neither despair of pardon nor presume to continue in the state of sin; but go to her pastor who will assist her to have the excommunication removed and the union raised to a valid marriage.

How, Marriage is Solemnized.

¶⁵⁴ In like manner to promote the joy and solemnity of the wedding the Church does not want marriages contracted during the penitential seasons of Lent and Advent, at which times they cannot be becomingly solemnized.

¶⁵⁵ Marriage is solemnized not only with the wedding feast and gathering of friends, but with the nuptial mass and appropriate blessings. As it is a sacrament of the living its recipients must be in the state of grace. Hence they prepare themselves for their new life by a good confession and receive as their first guest our divine Lord in the Holy Eucharist. Consequently, the proper time and place for the wedding is in the temple of God and at the morning mass. Happy that marriage to which Jesus is invited as He was at Cana of old.

¶⁵⁶ Banns are published three times before the wedding in the churches of both the prospective bride and groom. Their purpose is to prevent those

marriages which are made in haste only to be repented of at leisure. They guard against fraud and consequent shame. If the bland stranger, whose soft words quickly captivated an unwary maiden happens to have another wife somewhere, the fact has a chance to get in the path of the searchlight before it is too late. The open banns are a token of honor. To want them suppressed suggests the suspicion that there is something to be ashamed of and to be kept in the dark, though in most cases it is due to timidity and a false sense of shame. In Ohio at least banns make a license unnecessary.

¶⁵⁷ The pastor should be notified of the wedding three or four weeks in advance. If he is taken into your confidence much earlier, it will be to your interest. The wedding takes place at the church of the bride; to ask her pastor to allow another clergyman to perform the ceremony is to slight him, unless there be good reason for it. The groom directly or through his groomsman offers the pastor a fee according to circumstances.

Dispensation.

¶⁵⁸ Dispensation is a letting down of the legal barriers which the Church has raised for the protection in marriage of her children and their home. The Church will dispense from her laws only when there are good reasons for doing so. Sometimes im-

pediments fail to deter her children from a dangerous contract, and rather than cut them off entirely, to perish in the danger, she tries by other means to remove the peril or reduce it to a minimum.

The Church can never dispense from a law of God, nor allow anything morally wrong. She can dispense only from her own rules, and then only when she has provided by other means to remove the evil, which her rules are designed ordinarily to counteract.

Dispensations are not affected by any money consideration. The alms usually sent in to the chancery office along with the application for dispensation is turned over, after covering the expense of issuance, to the Orphan Asylum. While this penalty will remind the parties of the dangers they assume, the merit of the charitable deed and the prayers of the orphans will doubtless win for the giver needed grace in the new responsibilities.

The Non-Catholic's Agreement.

¶⁵⁹ One of the precautions taken in mixed marriage, when the Church does reluctantly witness them, is to exact of the non-Catholic party to the contract, a solemn promise not to interfere with the Catholic spouse in the practice of religion and to allow the children that may result from the union to be brought up in the Catholic faith. At first sight

this may seem to some rather severe, but a moment's reflection will show that it is the only condition under which a Catholic could enter the marriage without violating his conscience and exposing his very salvation. For the Catholic party knows that his Church is the true and only Church left by Jesus Christ and its teachings and sacraments the means ordained by God for our getting to heaven, and hence is bound not only to use the Church, but to give its advantages to any soul for whose entrance into the world he is responsible. For the Catholic to consent to a bargain whereby the girls would follow the religion of the mother and the boys that of the father, would be to deliberately allow half the children to be taught a false religion or none at all and to be deprived of what is known to be the true faith. As the Protestant often, and the unbeliever generally, will not have such a conviction that his sect is the one true church and the necessary means of salvation, he can without violating his conscience consent to have his children brought up in the Catholic faith, which he likely regards as just as safe as his own, on the saying that one religion is as good as another.

Thus the non-Catholic does not act against his conscience. The Church would not want him to do so, and neither will he, if he be a wise man, want his wife to do so. What if this agreement cannot

be made? To provide for eternal salvation is absolutely necessary; to marry Mr. A. or Miss B. is not necessary.

¶⁶⁰ A non-Catholic going with a Catholic friend ought to study up the old faith; and if it is found to give a satisfactory proof of its divine origin and to satisfy the needs of the soul the step of joining it would help all concerned—parents, home and children. Thousands have done this and never regretted it. This is a much better form of agreement than the one above spoken of.

Divorce.

¶⁶¹ Divorce has no place in Christian marriage and hence no place in these chapters. The work of marriage, the bringing up of a family of children, is a life work for both father and mother; and when that task is done the grey-haired parents will want no separation. Hence divorce is against the very nature of marriage. So Christ says: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." And again: "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another committeth adultery against her; and if the wife shall put away her husband and be married to another, she committeth adultery." Mark x.

The number of divorces in our day, their wide-spreading misery, and the fact that they arise

from people marrying with no more thought than they would buy a horse or rent a house, may well warn young men and women to choose their company with discrimination and think of wedlock as the solemn consecration of their lives to one another, and not as a mere society event or light engagement.

After the honeymoon, if it is found that angels and idols have feet of clay, St. Paul's advice to be "reconciled," to bear and forbear, or as is said "to kiss and make up," will prevent the little family frictions from generating such a flame as would burn down the home and require the intervention of the courts.

The first law of Christianity is charity, and if it is to be exercised toward the stranger and even the enemy, much more towards life's helpmate of plighted love and common interests. Marriage is the proper place for a mutual admiration society.

The Church Vindicated.

¶⁶² The Church has not lived two thousand years in vain. The wisdom of the laws with which she has safeguarded marriage and the home is vindicated by the freedom of her children from divorce, race-suicide, marital infidelity, ruined homes and the kindred evils which follow, like a Nemesis the

debasement of marriage from its dignity as a sacrament of the Christian religion to the level of a merely civil and human contract.

Such is marriage and the home as God would have it to bless the lives of men. First the fair young love clothing as with a rainbow the heyday of youth; then the responsibilities of parenthood, lightened by their own sweet joys and the hope of grateful promise; finally the old age, rich in the harvest of its years, and even though dying living still for God and country in the persons of its children.

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